

Marine Advisory Committee

March 4, 2014

Milton, Florida

The Marine Advisory Committee met on the above date with the following members present: Jeff Marker, Scott Mason, Rick Harris and Scott Walker. Also present were the County Administrator, Hunter Walker; Chris Verlinde, Marine Extension Agent; Roger Blaylock, County Engineer; and Avis Whitfield, Public Works Director. Chairman Jeff Marker called the meeting to order at 5:00p.m.

The minutes of the February 4, 2014 meeting were approved.

PROPOSED FISH

& WILDLIFE COMMISSION GULF OFFSHORE FISHING PERMIT 12th at the Escambia County Mr. Marker stated that a permit or registration process has been Mr. Marker said he believes anything done that would provide more accurate & Wildlife Commission. Mr. Mason said he believes Mr. Harris

Mr.

Harris inquired about those individuals that do not snapper fish and if it just pertained to

those that say they are going to reef fish. Mr. Marker said his understanding is in order to

they would have to have a mandatory permit or registration system and it would be separate from a license. He added that their desire is to provide better and more accurate data.

capture the reef fish data and define the population of the offshore reef fish anglers,

Mr.

received a survey from Fish

added that he receives a survey every year asking what

and what species had been hunted. He then asked

specific permit similar to what has been done on the hunting side.

Blaylock stated that he purchases a combination license every year and has never & Wildlife Commission relative to fishing surveys. He had been harvested in the last year if this would be considered a species Mr. Marker said it

1

would cover a broad species of fish that typically haunt reefs.

issue

Gulf Council and Fish & Wildlife Commission said that this permit would probably be

free for the first couple of years to see what percentage of saltwater licenses were going

offshore to reef fish. This would enable them to have a better understanding of the

numbers. Then surveys would be sent out to those who

the different species they are catching.

everyone's attention in the event that someone might want to attend the upcoming

workshop.

DISCUSSION OF PROPERTY FOR ORIOLE BEACH RAMP PARKING
EXPANSION

Mr. Mason stated that this had been discussed at the meeting held in Escambia County. Individuals from the had applied to see how many of Mr. Marker stated that he wanted to bring this to Mr. Mason stated that he planned to attend.

Mr.

certainly adequate during the week but that on the weekends and holidays it may fill up.

He said there could be a need for additional parking when there is heavier use.

Whitfield stated that he has been told that the existing parking area at Oriole beach is Mr.

Whitfield added there would be a gain of 70 feet of waterfront but there is not a lot you

could do to change the configuration of the old parking lot to make them work together.

This would allow approximately 30 parking spaces, subtracting a couple for stormwater

treatment

additional parking, disadvantages would be the cost.

would have to be cleared and adjacent property owners may not be happy with having a

parking lot next door.

Hunter Walker added that Oriole Beach is a real challenged boat ramp due to the lack of

depth and because of the seagrass it could not be dredged.

not aware of any complaints coming in of not being able to park there and is not sure how

badly this is needed. He added that from his point of view, the price is not in line with

the market.

realtor had asked that it be presented to this committee.

more appealing if it was a good ramp where larger boats could put in but most times of

the year that is not the case.

uses it due to the size of his own boat. Mr. Harris added that at low tide it is hard to get

past the sand bar and essentially nothing can be done due to the seagrass.

asked the committee

would not be a wise purchase.

PROJECTS/ISSUES UPDATE

Morrell Boat Ramp derelict vessel -

classified as derelict. The sheriff's code enforcement officers worked this case and discovered that the owner was indigent so

if purchased. Some of the advantages of purchasing the property would be theMr. Whitfield added that treesMr. Marker stated that he isMr. Banis asked if the county had been contacted and Mr. Walker said theMr. Whitfield said it would beMr. Mason said the water depth is the problem and he neverMr. Markerif anyone was interested in pursuing this and it was agreed that itMr. Whitfield stated that this vessel is not actuallyhe would not be able to offer any help. Mr.

Whitfield added that the owner was asked to sign off on letting the county get the boat

2

and having it destroyed and the necessary paperwork from the owner has been obtained. The county also has the license agreement from the property owner adjacent to the ramp in order to have necessary room to drag the boat up on land, tear it apart and load.

Mr.

Whitfield said that since the boat is grounded, he is in hopes that next week the tide will get high enough for a crew to drag it up on land and then carry to the landfill.

Mr.

Whitfield added that this action had been authorized by the Board of County Commissioners at their last meeting.

Escambia River Logjam Update - Hunter Walker stated that this was briefly discussed at . the last Marine Advisory meeting and he had contacted Robert Turpin with the Escambia County Marine Resources Department and they are pursuing the project. He added that they have issued a purchase order and expect to be starting rather quickly. The proposal from the group that is doing the work is to harvest the material and then recycle it.

Mr.

Walker stated that he had spoken with Com. Salter and he was not aware of it.

Boater Registration Fees as ofFebruary 28, 2014 is \$145,267.

OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Verlinde informed the committee that on April 14th Escambia County is having a Regional Lionfish Control Workshop in their county building on Fairfield Drive, from 4:30- 8:00 pm.

to fisherman and divers that wherever lionfish are seen or caught to report them especially inside the bay waters as some have already been killed there.

NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting is scheduled for May 6, 2014 at 5:00p.m.

Mr. Mason said that Mr. Turpin is keeping a record and has mentioned

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further . business to come before the Committee the meeting was adjourned at 5:30p.m.

RECREATIONAL

Hunter Walker stated there would be a workshop on March

Extension Office, which would be the sixth one held around the state to discuss offshore fishing permits.

discussed over the years in order to provide better data on red snapper and other reef fish. He added that this would involve a fee upon registration and from some of the comments he has heard, no one wants to pay for it. People would rather see it come out of their license fee.

data would be beneficial to the Fish

it is a good thing as it will determine how many people are going offshore who have licenses and who aren't going offshore. It would also provide a better count of the number of fish being caught and also people in the different areas and what they are catching. He added that if the fee is kept to a minimal, offshore fishermen probably would not complain too much as it would reveal that a lot of people that get saltwater licenses actually do stay inshore and fish for trout and redfish and there is only a small portion of those that go far offshore for amberjack, tuna and wahoo.

commented that it should include commercial licenses at some percentage.